

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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O R 191000Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2304

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BG, IN

SUBJECT: BANGLADESH: INDIAN REACTIONS

REF: NEW DELHI 15316

1. THE CPI'S DAILY "PATRIOT" NOVEMBER 19 HAS PICKED UP THE STORY CARRIED IN THE CALCUTTA CONGRESS-R DAILY "JUNGANTAR" (BENGALI LANGUAGE) IMPLICATING AMBASSADOR BOSTER IN RECENT EVENTS IN BANGLADESH (REFTEL). "PATRIOT" ADDS AN ADDITIONAL PARAGRAPH TO THE EFFECT THAT THERE ARE 85 U.S. "DIPLOMATS AND OFFICIAL OF DIFFERENT U.S. AGENCIES IN BANGLADESH. OUT OF THEM 157 (SIC) WERE STATIONED IN SAIGON DURING 1972-74."

2. THE NOVEMBER 19 EDITION OF "PATRIOT" PUBLISHES AN
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EDITORIAL ON BANGLADESH TITLED "MISCHIEF IN DACCA."

EDITORIAL SAYS INDIAN DOES NOT NEED ANY CERTIFICATE FROM

THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT THAT INDIAN FORCES ARE NOT INTERVENING IN BANGLADESH. THE MOTIVES OF THE U.S., PRC AND PAKISTAN IN BANGLADESH ARE ATTACKED, AND, "PATRIOT" CONCLUDES, THEY CANNOT BREAK THE BONDS OF "BLOOD AND CULTURE" THAT EXIST BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF INDIAN AND BANGLADESH.

3. "TIMES OF INDIA" NOVEMBER 19 IN ITS EDITORIAL DECRIES THE STORIES OF INDIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN BANGLADESH. THE PAPER WARNS OF THE "HAZARD OF LAWLESSNESS" WHICH COULD PRODUCE AN EXODUS INTO INDIA. THERE ARE DANGERS OF EXTREMISM AND "MRS. GANDHI HAS FOR UNDERSTANDABLE REASONS REFRAINED FROM SPELLING OUT THESE AWESOME POSSIBILITIES. BOTH THE IMPLICATION OF HER AND OTHER OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ARE CLEAR ENOUGH." NEW DELHI, THE EDITORIAL CONTINUES, SYMPATHIZES WITH THE EFFORTS OF MAJOR GENERAL ZIAUR RAHMAN AND OTHERS ATTEMPTING TO HOLD THE ARMED FORCES TOGETHER. THEY MUST APPRECIATE THAT THE RELEASE OF EXTREMISTS AND THEIR FAILURE TO CONTAIN ANTI-INDIAN OUTBURSTS "CANNOT REASSURE NEW DELHI." THEY SHOULD NOT "LIGHT-HEARTEDLY" THROW AWAY FRIENDSHIP WITH INDIA.

4. THE "TIMES" HEADLINES "MORE CLASHES IN CHITTAGONG AND COMILLA." CLASHES ARE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN TAKING PLACE IN CHITTAGONG SINCE THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 16 BETWEEN PRO AND ANTI-ZIAUR ELEMENTS IN THE ARMY AND NAVY. THE PAPER CARRIES A UNI WIRE SERVICE REPORT THAT A MAJORITY OF THE NAVY MEN OPPOSE ZIAUR. SEVERAL TOP RANKING ARMY OFFICERS WERE ALSO REPORTED KILLED BY MUSLIM LEAGUERS IN COMILLA AND CHITTAGONG CANTONMENTS AT THE INSTIGATION OF AN ARMY GROUP LED BY ZIAUR.

5. THE NOVEMBER 19 PRESS ALSO REPORTS THE CALL OF THE BANGLADESH HIGH COMMISSIONER, SHAMSUR RAHMAN, ON PRIME MINISTER GANDHI NOVEMBER 18 FOR TEN MINUTES. "INFORMED SOURCES" STATE THAT THE ENVOY DECLARED HIS GOVERNMENT'S "DESIRE TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH INDIA" AND THAT IT WANTED THEIR BORDER "TO REMAIN A BORDER OF PEACE." NO COMMENT BY MRS. GANDHI WAS CARRIED.

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6. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, REPRESENTATIVES OF BANGLADESH AND INDIA MET NOVEMBER 17 AT THE AGARTALA CHECK POST TO DISCUSS DEMARCATION OF THE BORDER AREAS FACING NOAKHALI AND COMILLA DISTRICTS.

7. USUALLY CALM AND COOL MEA JOINT SECRETARY (PAK/AFGHAN) CHIB OBSERVED INFORMALLY WITH SOME CONCERN TO EMBOFF NOVEMBER 18 THAT BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT SEEMED UNABLE TO RESTORE STABILITY AND ORDER AROUND THE COUNTRY. HE MENTIONED INSTABILITY IN NORTHERN BANGLADESH, SPORADIC

UPRISING AND DISOBEDIENCE BY SOLDIERS AND SAILORS IN
VARIOUS CENTERS, AND GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF UNCERTAINTY
WHICH SHOWED NO SIGNS OF ABATING.

8. COMMENT: OVER THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS THE INDIAN PRESS
COVERAGE OF EVENTS IN BANGLADESH INDICATES INCREASING
CONCERN FOR A BREAKDOWN IN LAW AND ORDER AND THE INABILITY
OF THE REGIME IN DACCA TO MAINTAIN ITS AUTHORITY. WE DO NOT
AT THIS TIME DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS BUT WILL
WATCH CAREFULLY FOR SIGNS OF ANY BUILDUP OF AN ATMOSPHERE
OF "GRAVE CONCERN."
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